

Report of Interrogation : No. 5859 of

9 November 1945
I/O Capt HALLE

P/W : Hilger Gustav
Rank : Counsellor of Embassy
Unit : Foreign Office
Capt'd : 19 May 1945, Salzburg.

Veracity: Believed reliable.

Report : Answer to Periodic Intelligence Questionnaire, MIS Sep-Oct 1945.

Question U.S.S.R. # 7 : What steps have been undertaken to organize Russian rule in the part of Eastern Prussia to be added to the Soviet Union ? Will that region be placed in the Lithuanian S.R. ?

Answer # 7: The economic relations between East Prussia and Russia have always been very strong before the first World War. A considerable fraction of the Russian export of leguminous plants was handled at the port of Koenigsberg, which had special installations for that purpose. After the Bolshevik revolution and after trade between Russia and Germany had been resumed, the administration of the province of East Prussia and of the city of Koenigsberg made efforts to reestablish the former relations with Russia. As part of these attempts the Governor of East Prussia and the Mayor of Koenigsberg made an official visit to Moscow around 1928/29. They tried to induce the Soviet government to route a part of its agricultural exports through Koenigsberg. They got a friendly reception, but their mission failed, because the Soviet Union apparently considered it more advantageous to handle its exports through the port of Leningrad which had been expanded and through the port of Odessa. Even after the assumption of power in Germany by the Nazis, the city of Koenigsberg continued to try to flirt with Moscow. Erich Koch, who was made Governor of East Prussia by Hitler and later infamous Commissar of the Reich in the Ukraine, was known to be at the beginning in favor of good economic relations between Russia and East Prussia. The Soviet Union also participated regularly in the annual "German Eastern Fair" (Deutsche Ostmesse) in Koenigsberg until about 1936.

On the other hand the conservative East Prussian Junkers always looked upon the Soviet government as a thorn in their side. For this reason the Soviet government was very anxious right after the German collapse to destroy this forward bastion of the German "Drang nach dem Osten" (thrust towards the East) and to take possession of East Prussia. Furthermore the Soviet government considers East Prussia as the most strategic and most important position for the domination of the Baltic Sea and the harbor of Koenigsberg as a valuable supplement to the facilities of the harbor of Liepaja which is in the Latvian Soviet Republic and which was the only ice-free port at Russia's disposal after Latvia's annexation by the Soviet Union.

Informant has no concrete documentation which would enable him to judge to what extent the sovietization of East Prussia has already been completed. A considerable portion of East Prussia's population left the country before the Red Army marched in and another portion left willingly or forcibly after.

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the occupation. Thus the Soviet government will be able to make a clean sweep and establish conditions best suited for her aims. This will probably mean that East Prussia is to be a forward bastion of Russia's thrust towards the West which could serve if necessary as a valuable "place d'armes".

Not knowing the events which have taken place in East Prussia in the meantime, informant can only surmise the future intentions of the Soviet government in East Prussia, basing his suppositions on his observations of Russian political methods acquired during many years. Informant believes that the Soviet government will administer East Prussia at first through a military government and expand it as a military and economic base. Later on this territory will probably be incorporated into the RSFSR (Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic). The fact that East Prussia does not have a common border with that Republic will not be a determining factor in that decision: the Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic of the Crimea is also part of the RSFSR, although it is separated from it by the Ukraine. It is impossible to say whether or not East Prussia will be populated with Russians exclusively. If not, the Soviet government might use the remnants of the Masurians living there as the "national" basis on which the fiction of an autonomous territory will be built.

Informant considers it least probable that the Soviet government will incorporate East Prussia into the Lithuanian SSR. Lithuania has been amply compensated by regaining the Memel territory with the harbor of Memel (Klaipeda) and the city of Wilna. Furthermore the Soviet government will be anxious to use this strategic base in East Prussia as a means of exerting pressure on Poland.

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